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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 004430

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SUBJECT: SPAIN: RESPONSE TO SECOND ROUND OF UKRAINIAN  
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

REF: STATE 240442

Classified By: Political Officer Ricardo Zuniga.

Reason 1.4 (B) and (D)

1. (C) Poloffs met with the MFA desk officer for Russia and Eastern European affairs, Marta Ruiz, 11/16 to encourage Spain's participation in the second round of presidential election in the Ukraine set for November 21 and to hear GOS views on imposing visa restrictions on Ukrainian officials who have engaged in electoral fraud or manipulation (reftel).

Ruiz told us that Spain agrees that the previous election round did not meet international standards. She added that although the GOS would like to see the OSCE augment its international election observer presence for the second round, Spain does not plan to participate in it. Ruiz explained that Spain is currently resolving legal differences with the OSCE over funding for Spanish participation in OSCE election observer missions. She added that the GOS expects the legal issue to be resolved in the coming months so that Spanish OSCE members can participate in future missions.

2. (C) On the issue of visa bans against Ukrainian officials involved in electoral fraud, Ruiz told poloffs that because Spain is party to the Schengen visa agreements, it cannot introduce a travel ban without the approval of all Schengen members. She added that any travel restriction measures would also have to be discussed within the EU and would not have an immediate effect on prohibiting the travel of Ukrainian official who are found to have engaged in electoral fraud.

ARGYROS